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14 September 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: NIE-95: Probable Soviet Bloc Courses of Action
Through Mid-1955

1. This is an estimate of what the Bloc probably will do during the next two years. It supplements NIE-90, which with its Appendices was an estimate of what the Bloc probably could do during the same period.
2. The present paper takes the view that the Bloc will probably avoid actions involving substantial risk of general war, and will try to divide and confuse the West by the appearance of a conciliatory policy. In short, that the danger which must be anticipated is that the Bloc will persuade the West to relax its vigilance, rather than that it will (as frequently in the past) act so as to confirm the West in its program of united defense.
3. OIR feels, however, that the likelihood of militantly offensive actions by the Bloc is inadequately recognized in this paper. OIR will submit a redraft of paragraph 2, together with some lesser changes, to make this point. Clearly it would be impossible for the Bloc to undertake any significant offensive acts, or to pursue markedly harsh international policies, and at the same time expect to lull the West into relaxation. The Board believes that the modifications to be suggested by OIR constitute a significant difference from the fundamental estimate contained in the paper and that these views should appear as a footnote of dissent (or of comment) rather than being accepted for the text.
4. Navy will probably wish to rewrite paragraph 7 so as to alter the emphasis. The paragraph as presently drafted was adopted by majority vote — a procedure not often followed.
5. There will probably be numerous other changes suggested. This paper was discussed by agency representatives for two days, and then for two additional days in a clean-up session. A further clean-up session might have been desirable, but the urgency of the requirement for the estimate makes this impossible.

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